

IN THE CLAIMS

Please enter the below clarifying claim amendments.

1. (canceled)
2. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 further comprising ~~the step of~~ rewarding physicians' efforts to reduce costs by providing a share of savings in response to utilizing said standardized procedure.
3. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 wherein ~~said~~ collecting ~~step~~ comprises determining resources used in said clinical procedure.
4. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 wherein ~~said~~ establishing ~~step~~ comprises identifying resources to be used to establish said benchmark for said clinical procedure.
5. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 wherein standardizing ~~step~~ comprises setting the quantity of at least one resource to be used for said clinical procedure while correlating the clinical outcome.
6. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 further comprising ~~the steps of~~ accepting a request for said clinical procedure, and requesting resources to be utilized in said clinical procedure based upon said benchmark.
7. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 further comprising ~~the steps of~~ accepting a request for said clinical procedure, and allocating resources to said clinical procedure based upon said benchmark.
8. (currently amended) The method of Claim 7 further comprising ~~the step of~~ verifying the existence of supplies in inventory.

9. (currently amended) The method of Claim 7 further comprising ~~the step of~~ scheduling the requisitioning of supplies based upon said benchmark.

10. (currently amended) The method of Claim 7 further comprising ~~the step of~~ automatically ordering supplies from vendors based upon the needs of the clinical practice based upon said benchmark.

11. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 further comprising ~~the step of~~ compiling a report of resources utilization based upon said data.

12-13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) The method of Claim 11 wherein said report comprises at least one of a procedure results report, and a clinical outcomes report, and a patient profile report.

15. (original) The method of Claim 11 wherein said report comprises information on medication used during said clinical procedure.

16. (original) The method of Claim 11 wherein said report comprises information on the length of stay of patients undergoing said clinical procedures.

17. (original) The method of Claim 11 wherein said report comprises information on the demographics of patients undergoing said clinical procedure.

18. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 wherein ~~said~~ collecting ~~step~~ comprises monitoring the cost of said clinical procedure to provide a benchmark.

19. (currently amended) The method of Claim 24 wherein ~~said~~ collecting ~~step~~ comprises monitoring costs of requisitioned supplies.

20-23. (canceled)

24. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method of increasing resource utilization efficiency and identifying areas to enhance quality, the method comprising: [[the steps of:]]

collecting data related to a specific clinical procedure and electronically storing the collected data in a database, the data including patient quality, patient clinical presentation, diagnostic procedure indication, interventional procedure indication, diagnostic procedure results, interventional procedure results, patient length of stay, and patient medication usage;

, wherein the collected data is electronically stored in a database;

identifying from the collected data reduction opportunities for reducing waste and costs during the specific clinical procedure;

establishing a benchmark related to the specific clinical procedure based upon the identified reduction opportunities and at least a portion of the data; [[and]]

standardizing the specific clinical procedure based upon the benchmark to provide standardized practice patterns by eliminating unnecessary resources; and

establishing preferred clinical practice standards based upon the standardized practice patterns to increase resource utilization efficiency.

25. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method of increasing resource utilization efficiency and identifying areas to enhance quality, the method comprising: [[the steps of:]]

allocating a resource for a specific clinical procedure;

conducting the specific clinical procedure during which time at least a portion of the resource is utilized;

collecting data related to the allocation of the resource and the conducted specific clinical procedure, the data including procedure type, medical professional identification, and medical facility identification, wherein the collected data is electronically stored in a database;

identifying from the stored data reduction opportunities for reducing waste and costs of the resource for the specific clinical procedure;

establishing a benchmark based upon the identified reduction opportunities and the utilization of the resource, the benchmark correlating to an average utilization of the resource for the specific clinical procedure;

standardizing the specific clinical procedure based upon the benchmark by eliminating unnecessary resources; [[and]]

providing the standardization for the specific clinical procedure prior to conducting a subsequent specific clinical procedure, such that fewer resources are allocated; and
providing on a predetermined frequency basis established benchmark data to a plurality of medical facilities via a computer network, the benchmark data including regional, national, and best-in-class benchmarks.

26. (currently amended) The method of Claim 25 further comprising the step of rewarding physicians' efforts to reduce costs by providing a share of savings in response to utilizing the standardized specific clinical procedure.

27. (cancelled)

28. (new) The method of Claim 26 further comprising determining a benchmark procedure area cost basis for a category of procedures for use in calculating the savings, wherein determining the benchmark procedure area cost basis comprises: (a) determining an average benchmark costs of a procedure area; (b) determining actual costs for the procedure area; and (c) comparing the average benchmark costs to the actual costs.

29. (new) The method of claim 24 further comprising providing a recommended utilization amount of a resource for the specific clinical procedure and predicting cost savings by comparing the recommended utilization amount and an actual amount of used resources.

30. (new) The method of claim 25 further comprising predicting expenses and cost savings opportunities based on a comparison of the benchmark and an actual amount of utilized resources.